

## ***PEST EXCLUSION TRAINING MANUAL***

# **LESSON 3:**

### ***Vehicle Inspection (Private and Commercial Vehicles)***

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#### **PEST RISK**

Ideally, all vehicles entering our stations would be given a 100% physical inspection. However, due to personnel, inspection space, and time constraints, this is not a reasonable standard. Therefore, we must prioritize our inspections based on “pest risk.” Pest risk is: **The likelihood that any given vehicle is carrying commodities that are potentially harboring pests, which pose a serious threat to California agriculture.**

When assessing pest risk, the following factors should be considered:

- **Time of Year/Season**

The time of year is an important factor. Consider what quarantined commodities are available in the state of origin or the states along the route of travel. Generally, summer and fall present a higher pest risk factor than do winter and spring.

- **Type of Vehicle**

Experience tells us that restricted commodities are more likely to be carried in certain types of vehicles than others. For example, recreational vehicles present a higher pest risk factor than do private vehicles. Self-moving trucks and trailers (U-Haul, Ryder, etc.) are likely to carry plants, animals, and outdoor articles from gypsy moth areas. Commercial trucks pulling trailers with refrigeration units generally present a higher pest risk factor than do those pulling nonrefrigerated trailers.

- **Vehicle Occupants**

Who is traveling in the vehicle? A vehicle carrying a family on vacation is more likely to harbor fruits and vegetables than one carrying a person on a business trip, and therefore should be given a more thorough inspection.

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- **Origin of Vehicle/Route of Travel**

One of the most important elements in the inspection of travelers is the possible acquisition of prohibited fruit and vegetables as they relate to the point of origin. For instance, travelers from Canada may bring prohibited fruits and vegetables (litchi, longans, or other tropical produce) that are not available in California. The same would apply to travelers returning from northern Mexico (guava, papaya, citrus) or travelers returning from Texas or the southeast.

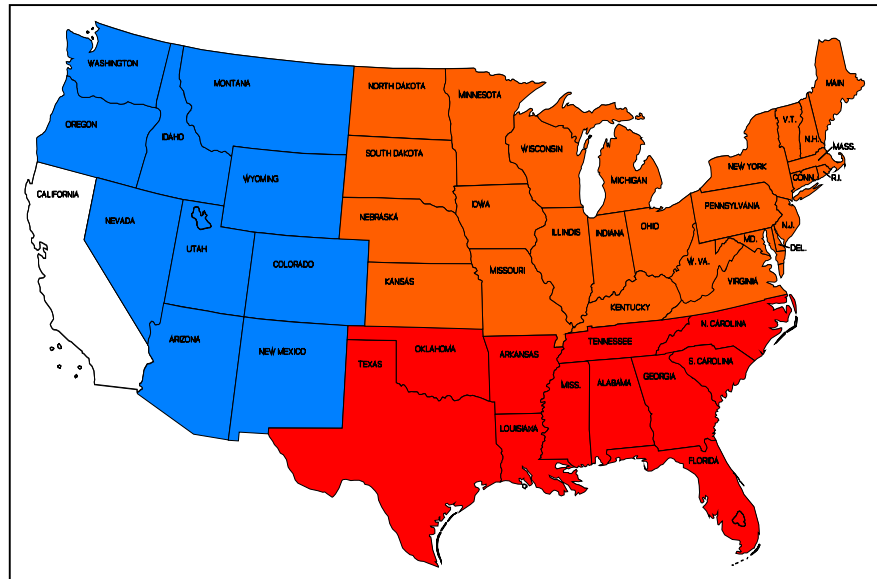
#### **Pest Risk Factor**

■ = Very High

■ = High

■ = Moderate

**Note:** Canada and Mexico should also be considered as “very high” risk.



## **PRIVATE VEHICLES**

### **The Contact**

The method in which the traveler is contacted is very important. The first impression given to the traveler will be likely to set the tone for the entire inspection process. It should be noted that the contact of travelers might vary somewhat from station to station; therefore, no set routine will be included here. Try to observe the techniques of other inspectors. After observing for a period of time, you will develop your own style of contacting the public - one that works best for you.

Some common factors which should be observed at all stations:

- For safety and appearance reasons, always be alert to incoming traffic. Do not be engrossed with reading or other activities when vehicles are approaching the station.
- Always make eye contact with the driver.
- Smile and greet the driver with a friendly salutation (i.e., good morning, hello folks, etc.).

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- To be able to determine the pest risk factor of the vehicle, you must ascertain its origin and route of travel. Look the vehicle over for visual clues, such as license plates (many eastern states do not require a front license plate), state inspection stickers (in the windshield), amount of “bugs” and soil on the vehicle (heavily soiled vehicles often have been traveling for long distances), and bumper stickers, maps, or souvenirs (many of these may have the names of the places where the vehicle has traveled).

If it is not readily evident where the vehicle is traveling from, you will need to ask. Use a phrase such as “Where are you traveling from, please?”, or something similar. It should be noted that travelers are not required by law to answer this question, and occasionally objections may be raised. In these cases, the inspector should simply treat the vehicle as if it presents a very high pest risk and give it a full physical inspection.

#### **The Inspection**

If we look at inspection techniques, we will find that all inspections can be broken down into two sections. These sections are physical and verbal. During the physical portion of the inspection, various places or containers in the vehicle are visually inspected for restricted commodities. During the verbal portion we solicit the traveler’s cooperation in declaring any plant material that might be carried in the vehicle. Obviously, physically inspecting all places in each vehicle would be the surest method of ensuring that no restricted commodities are carried. However, due to the time constraints placed upon us by workload, this is generally not feasible. Therefore, we must rely on verbal inspection to a great degree. Pest risk and workload will determine how much of the inspection will be physical and how much will be verbal. The higher the pest risk, the more thorough the physical inspection should be. Remember, as mentioned at the beginning of the lesson, the goal is to give all vehicles a thorough inspection.

As with the contact, there is no set routine for an inspection procedure. Each inspector should develop a procedure, which is effective and suited to the individual’s personality. Here are a few techniques that will help you:

#### **General:**

- If at all possible, any move that delays inspection should be eliminated. The more efficient your inspection, the more vehicles you will be able to properly inspect.
- Act interested. If you give the traveler the impression that you are bored, don’t care, or are merely “going through the motions,” it will be difficult to solicit any positive response. If you don’t care about finding the plant material, the public is not going to care about declaring it.
- Wait until after you have finished both the physical and verbal portions of your inspection before informing the traveler that prohibited plant material cannot enter the state. People often become uncooperative upon being informed that they may not bring a commodity across the border. It will be easier to complete your inspection if you wait until you are finished to inform them of the prohibited commodity.

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- Generally, it is better to inform the vehicle occupants that you are going to search various places in the vehicle (i.e., trunk, ice chests, bags, etc.) before asking for a declaration. If you ask for a declaration and then, after the traveler has told you that there is no plant material being carried, ask to inspect the vehicle, you are in essence questioning the honesty of the traveler. You will avoid many arguments by asking for a declaration during or after the inspection.

#### **Physical:**

- Before physically inspecting any vehicle you must inform the driver of the purpose of the inspection. Use a statement such as “This is an agricultural inspection, I will need to have a look in the...” This will often clear up the misconception that you are looking for drugs, illegal aliens, or other illegal contraband.
- Good places to look include: ice chests, refrigerators, sinks or shower stalls of recreational vehicles (plants are often carried here), and grocery bags.
- Do not limit your inspection to the obvious areas listed above. Plant material is often found in very unlikely places.
- Constantly be alert to other traffic while performing your inspections. If possible, inspect trunks from the side, rather than from the back. This will minimize the potential for you to get “pinched” between two vehicles.
- Be careful not to damage or soil vehicles or belongings. If possible, the traveler should do all opening and closing of items (trunks, RV doors, suitcases, ice chests, etc.). Be aware, when entering trailers or recreational vehicles, that your shoes may be carrying oil or soil. Wipe your feet before entering. If asked to remove your shoes, politely do so and continue with the inspection.

#### **Verbal:**

- Most travelers are good citizens. In most instances, the failure to declare plant material is due to one of the following reasons: 1) The traveler does not know what you are looking for, 2) the traveler is not aware that the material is in the vehicle, or 3) the traveler does not realize that the commodity they are carrying is plant material. Because of this, it is often helpful to state specific examples of the commodities you are looking for. For example: “I would like to see any fruit you have in the vehicle, such as cherries, oranges, or mangoes.”
- When soliciting a declaration of plant material from a traveler, do so with open-ended questions or statements (i.e., “I would like to see any fruits, vegetables, or plants you are carrying.” or, “What types of plant material do you have in the vehicle?”). Questions or statements such as these force the traveler to slow down and think about their reply. If you ask questions that can be answered with “yes” or “no,” more often than not, “no” will be the answer.

### **TRUCK INSPECTION**

All commercial truck shipments should be **inspected** for regulated commodities. This should be done either by visual inspection of the cargo or by checking the bills of lading. As workload permits, all trucks carrying agricultural commodities should be physically inspected for pests and to verify contents. A good rule of thumb is **if a truck is recorded on the truck sheet, it should be physically inspected**. Additionally, empty trailers should be visually inspected for debris, weed seeds, and insect infestation.

When a truck cannot be cleared without being opened for inspection and the driver refuses or cannot open the trailer, the shipment should be rejected using Sections 5024 and 5346 of the California Food and Agricultural Code. For more detailed truck inspection procedures, refer to Section 1.1.4 of the Station Operating Guide.

#### **Bill of Lading**

A bill of lading is a manifest or inventory stating the contents of the shipment. Although not required by law, most trucks will have a bill of lading. There are many formats and variations of these documents, and not all are easily read.

Things to look for:

- **Current date.** The date on the bill of lading is usually the date that the product was shipped. Ask yourself if it is reasonable the truck has been on the road since the date shown. Note: For the purpose of the examples of bills of lading and certificates contained in this manual, please ignore any dates, as it is not possible to keep them current.
- **Commodity.** The exact commodity must be specified. Often drivers will present a bill of lading for FAK (freight of all kinds) or LTL (less than a load) freight. Bills such as these are inadequate and a more detailed description should be sought.
- **Refrigeration unit of trailer.** If a refrigeration unit is running, and the commodity declared on the bill of lading is for dry goods (i.e., paper, lumber, flour, etc.), this should raise suspicion and may be reason for further inspection.

### **FORMS AND STAMPS**

The following forms are commonly used for processing commercial shipments. With the exception of Form 66-073 (Truck Report), all forms should be completed either on a computer or in ink, in a complete, accurate, and legible manner.

- **Truck Report - 66-073**

This form should be completed for all non-processed agricultural commodities and any other commodities that are regulated by our quarantines. For detailed instructions refer to Section 1.2.1 of the Station Operating Guide.

- **Inbound Hay and Cube/Processing Apples Passing Report - 220-003**

This form should be completed for all shipments of alfalfa hay, alfalfa hay cubes, and processing apples.

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- **Warning Notices - 66-008 and 66-008A (Computer Generated)**

Warning Notices are to be issued when complete inspection of a regulated commodity is not given at the station, and the shipment is sent forward to the destination county for final inspection. Refer to the following Operating Guide Sections for instructions regarding these forms: 1.2.2, 1.6.1, 1.6.2, and 1.6.5.

- **Rejection Notice - 66-071 (Computer Generated)**

A Rejection Notice should be completed for all commercial shipments that do not comply with quarantine regulations at the time of entry. An exception to this will be made in the case of feed grain and hay shipments infected with restricted weed seed and diverted to an approved mill (See Sections 1.3.2 and 1.3.5 of the Station Operating Guide). A Rejection Notice should also be issued for all animal rejections. For instructions on completing this form, refer to Section 1.2.4 of the Station Operating Guide and Quarantine Commissioners Circular No. 216.

- **Citation - 66-050**

The authority to issue citations brings a great deal of responsibility with it. A violation of a legal statute must be committed to warrant a citation. A citation cannot be issued simply because the person is belligerent, unfriendly, or uncooperative. A citation should never be issued to punish undesirable conduct.

Generally, the purpose of issuing a citation is to deter the party from repeating the same illegal action. Every possible alternative to the problem should be exhausted before issuing a citation. Reserve the use of citations for flagrant violations.

As inspectors are public servants, they are required to maintain friendly relations with the public. Never threaten a person with a citation in order to show your authority. Each case should be examined on an individual basis to determine if a citation is warranted. For detailed information on issuing citations, refer to Section 1.5.1 of the Station Operating Guide.

Generally speaking, whenever possible citations should be issued by permanent employees. This is because trial dates potentially may occur after a seasonal employee has been separated, making it difficult for the employee to appear in court.

- **Rubber Stamps**

There are several rubber stamps used for marking bills of lading, certificates, and other documents encountered while performing truck and bus inspections. For a listing of these stamps and their uses, refer to Section 1.2.6 of the Station Operating Guide.

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#### **BUS INSPECTION**

Inspectors shall follow the steps below when inspecting buses (exceptions may be made for certain local buses and tour buses):

- The inspector will inform the travelers of the purpose of the inspection (this should be done by addressing the passengers while walking down the aisle).
- The inspector will permit the passengers to leave the bus if they desire, but in no case will he or she request them to get off the bus.
- The inspector will inquire of each traveler as to whether or not that person is carrying plant material with them or in their baggage. When a commodity covered by a quarantine is declared and is in the checked baggage, the inspector will:
  - Remove the commodity, especially when the commodity presents a high pest risk (e.g., fruit fly, pink bollworm, cotton boll weevil, etc., host material), if at all possible.
  - If impossible to remove the commodity, issue a “Warning Hold Notice (66-008)” for the item. The station should then contact the agricultural commissioner at the destination by telephone (after hours use fax machine) and give all pertinent information necessary to make an immediate rejection at the bus depot.
  - Record any bus rejections on Form 66-032 (Daily Tally of Interceptions).
  - Record any bus Warning Notices on Form 66-073 (Truck Sheet).
  - If the owner is not present, nonperishable rejections from buses must be held for ten (10) days to give the receiver the opportunity to decide what the disposition of the article will be. **Under no circumstances should the commodity be destroyed before this ten (10) day period.**
- Inspect the floor, seats, racks, lunch boxes, bags, and any suspicious baggage inside the bus for the presence of plant material. Checked baggage may be passed without inspection if the owner declares no quarantine material.
- With the exception of local bus traffic, the luggage/express compartment underneath the bus should be inspected in all cases.